

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafield, Director

() Release (X) Excise () Deny
Exemption(s): B1

Declassify: (X) In Part () In Full

() Classify as S () Extend as S () Downgrade to ---
Date 6/4/81 Declassify on Reason 25X1

OO RUEBBA
DE RUEBDO #5866 3641108
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
O 30104Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5525
INFO RUEBBA/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES IMMEDIATE 6872
RUDTC/AMEMBASSY LONDON 150
BT

MONTEVIDEO 5866

DD 290

TO	ACT	INF	TO	ACT	INF
AMB 2			DAD		
204 2			L-DAT		
			DEF		
ROL			FAS		
ECOM			AID		
POI/M			MLGP		
CO S			RE		
ADM			OPN		
USIS			B/F		
SOI			ORIN		
BT			IF		

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: SHUM, UY

SUBJ: HUMAN RIGHTS: ARREST BY GOV OF PIANIST MIGUEL ESTRELLA
AND OTHER ALLEGED MONTENOS IN URUGUAY

REF: STATE 308335

BEVIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. AS CONFIRMED BY OFFICIAL GOV PRESS ANNOUNCEMENTS, MIGUEL ANGEL ESTRELLA AVILA BORGES WAS AMONG THOSE CAPTURED IN THE DECEMBER 15-16 BLITZKRIEG AGAINST SUSPECTED ARGENTINE MONTENOS HIDING OUT IN URUGUAY. IN THE COURSE OF THE RAIDS, WHICH WERE SCATTERED THROUGHOUT MONTEVIDEO, FOUR PERSONS WERE CAPTURED (INCLUDING ESTRELLA); TWO COMMITTED SUICIDE AT THE MOMENT OF ARREST BY INGESTING CYANIDE; AND ONE WAS KILLED IN A GUNBATTLE. ALL FOUR OF THE SURVIVORS WERE LATER INDICTED UNDER THE MILITARY PENAL CODE FOR MEMBERSHIP IN A SUBVERSIVE ORGANIZATION, A CHARGE WHICH CARRIES A SENTENCE OF FROM THREE TO EIGHTEEN YEARS. CURRENTLY, THEY ARE AWAITING EXTRADITION BACK TO ARGENTINA. A SMALL CACHE OF WEAPONS WAS REPORTEDLY FOUND, ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT KNOWN IF THESE WERE CONNECTED TO ESTRELLA'S PARTICULAR CASE.

2. THE STORY OF THE CAPTURE, AS EMBODIED IN OFFICIAL PRESS RELEASES CARRIED VERBATIM IN ALL LOCAL DAILIES AFTER THE ARRESTS AND AFTER THE INDICTMENTS, HERALDED THE RAIDS TRIUMPHANTLY. THE PRESS STATEMENTS STRESSED THE MONTENOS' SPECIAL SKILL IN BOMB-MAKING, THEIR FANATICISM; THEIR COMPARTMENTALIZED (AND HENCE SECURE) INFRASTRUCTURE AND THEIR HEAVY FINANCING FROM INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST SOURCES. IT ATTRIBUTED THEIR OVERTHROW TO THE "COOPERATION OF THE URUGUAYAN PEOPLE, WHO DO NOT WANT TO RETURN TO THE UNHAPPY PAST..." AND TO THE "UNCEASING VIGILANCE OF THE SECURITY FORCES..."

3. ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIAL PRESS STATEMENT, ESTRELLA IS A NATIVE ARGENTINIAN, BORN IN TUCUMAN PROVINCE ON JULY 8, 1936. HE IS A WIDOWER. END UNCLASSIFIED

4. BEGIN

MORE THAN THE SEVEN ARGENTINES MENTIONED IN THE OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT WERE INVOLVED AND THAT EIGHT PRISONERS WERE TAKEN RATHER THAN THE FOUR NAMED IN THE RELEASE.

WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER ALL THE ARGENTINES TAKEN PRISONER HAVE YET BEEN TURNED OVER TO GOA AUTHORITIES BUT WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED BY GOV SOURCES THAT ALL, INCLUDING ESTRELLA, WILL SHORTLY BE RETURNED TO ARGENTINA. WE WILL FOLLOW CLOSELY AND CONFIRM WHEN AND IF THIS TAKES PLACE. END

PEZZULLO

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